

I support media diversity

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. In its goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry.

The lack of competition and subsequent lack of diversity is truly frightening. On simply an artistic level, radio has become homogenous across the country - no longer can one find classical music of decent quality in a major city, or varied kinds of music in outlying areas. As it now stands, towns and cities are becoming indistinguishable from one another. If we wish to have the same appearance from town to town, the breadth of this great country is lost. If we lose the local flavor, interest, and intensity of locally owned and operated media outlets, then what makes us distinctive is lost.

I have seen the types of news that is delivered by a number of the large media conglomerates - shallow, self-serving, jingoistic, and an assault to the senses. No debate, no reflection, no consideration of the issues that matter on a local level. A case in point: one of our local television affiliates broadcast several items as news as they pertained to the final installment of the show "Survivor". They spent a great deal of time on this, while ignoring local news. Do we honestly think this situation will improve with greater control from these large media corporations?

This is not a market issue: the airwaves are the property of the American people, not a public utility to be awarded the highest bidder. Let the market work its wonders on the auto industry, or consumer electronics. Do not allow our airwaves, our link to our own community, to become merely a profit center for a company that has no center where it broadcasts.

Respectfully,

Ronald Pearl